

Summary Document

Results of the application of the Participatory Methodology in the application process for inscription of Torres Vedras Carnival on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

Introduction

Between October 2024 and February 2025, the Centro de Artes e Criatividade (Centre for Arts and Creativity) (CAC) coordinated a participatory process, with the aim of involving the local community in the process of applying to inscribe Torres Vedras Carnival on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This document summarises the results of that process, highlighting the main contributions and proposals identified by participants.

Methodology and Participants

The methodology adopted was based on UNESCO's recommendations, which emphasise the importance of actively involving practitioners and other relevant actors in the application process. The following steps were taken:

1. **Information Sessions and Public Debate:** Two sessions were held to raise awareness in the community about the application and UNESCO's recommendations for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (one session for practitioners and the general public, and the other session for a Promotorres meeting with the masked groups).
2. **Working Groups:** Four specific sessions to identify contributions to the safeguarding plan and collect statements of support for the application.
3. **Web page for the process:** Creation of a page on the CAC's website documenting the various stages of the process, with texts, photos and videos to promote transparency and facilitate access to information.

4. Declaration of Principles of Sustainable Tourism:

A Declaration of Principles of Sustainable Tourism has been drawn up, in line with UNESCO's recommendations and the local community's concerns (incorporating the opinion of the Councillor for Tourism, the CAC and Promotorres). Among other topics, the principles include:

- Safeguarding traditions;
- Security and infrastructure;
- Promotion of good environmental and social practices;
- Governance and community participation.

In total, around 60 people took part in this process, including:

- Carnival practitioners and organisers (carnival associations, carnival kings, masked groups, horse riders, artists, the city council, Promotorres and CAC, among others);
- Other organisations and individuals with relevant social, cultural or economic roles in this field.

Results of the Participatory Process. Contributions to the Safeguarding Plan

The working groups identified 3 priority areas for measures to be included in the Safeguarding Plan:

1. **Transmission of traditions to young people:** Identification of risks associated with new generations being disconnected from traditional practices such as the parades, enthronement of the Carnival Kings, the burial of the "*Entrudo*" and the valorisation of handmade masks. There is a concern that, in the future, young people may primarily associate Carnival with night-time entertainment, and devalue its cultural elements.

Suggestions:

- a) Reinforcing educational activities in schools for secondary school students;
- b) Awareness-raising campaigns on traditional practices;
- c) Campaigns to promote moderate drinking.

2. **Safety and infrastructures:** Concerns about the capacity of the venue, circulation in the historic centre and toilet facilities.

Suggestions: Continue to invest in security and logistical measures, with annual evaluations and adjustments as necessary. In particular the measures publicised by Promotorres, such as:

- a) An annual investment of €170,000 in safety, with around 1,500 professionals involved.
- b) Co-operation with the police (PSP), Fire Brigade and Red Cross, installation of video surveillance cameras.
- c) Expansion of the Carnival precinct, if necessary to guarantee better circulation and safety conditions.

3. The quality of the Parades: Recognition of the need to improve the quality of the Parades while maintaining their key characteristics, such as spontaneity and proximity between revellers and the public (a parade "without barriers or benches", held in the city centre). Challenges mentioned: the difficult mobility of floats, masked groups and other elements; the risk of massification of the event and the desire to increase the creative quality of the parades.

Suggestions:

- a) Discuss the possibility of expanding the parade route.
- b) Implement temporary measures and, if necessary, limit capacity.
- c) Promote discussion of this issue among practitioners, organisers, policymakers and police authorities to define medium-term solutions.

To reinforce transparency and the active participation of communities in decisions related to Torres Vedras Carnival, and in accordance with Principle 8 (Inclusive Governance) of the Declaration of Sustainable Tourism, the following was suggested:

1. Implementation of digital consultation tools with the creation of online forms to record community votes/opinions, guaranteeing the structured dissemination of the results.
2. Reinforcing communication at evaluation meetings by drawing up minutes with the community's proposals and communicating the decisions taken on these proposals in subsequent meetings.

These mechanisms reinforce transparency and proximity between the organisation and the community.

Conclusions

This document reflects the commitment of the local community and the institutions involved to guarantee the continuity and valorisation of Torres Vedras Carnival, ensuring that it continues to be a lively and dynamic expression of local culture. Torres Vedras Carnival is a living reflection of the creativity and identity of the local community. The application to UNESCO represents not only formal recognition, but also a commitment to preserve its cultural legacy for future generations.

The participatory process fostered community involvement and concern for the continuity and sustainability of Torres Vedras Carnival. Significant opportunities were highlighted, such as

strengthening social cohesion and increasing international projection, as well as challenges that require attention, in particular with regard to safeguarding traditions, safety management and the quality of the event.

Community, groups and individuals (present at 1 or more sessions)		
Name	Organisation	Session*
1. Jorge Paulo Costa Hilário	Ministros&Matrafonas Carnival Association	SI-GT2- F
2. Fábio Passos	Ministros&Matrafonas Carnival Association	SI
3. Filipa Sousa	SacÁdegas Carnival Association	SI-GT2- F
4. Vanda Dias	SacÁdegas Carnival Association	SI
5. Teresa Vicente	Real Confraria Carnival Association	F
6. Natalina Luís	Real Confraria Carnival Association	F
7. Joaquim Francisco	Real Confraria Carnival Association	SI
8. Luís Manuel Teixeira Vilela	Flauzinas Carnival Association	SI-GT2- F
9. Adelino Domingues	Flauzinas Carnival Association	SI-GT2- F
10. Paula Pires	Marias Cachuchas Carnival Association	SI-GT2- F
11. Pedro Marcelino	Fidalgos Carnival Association	F
12. Paulo Costa	Fidalgos Carnival Association	GT2
13. Norberto Reis	Fidalgos Carnival Association	F
14. Ricardo Silva	Lúmbias Carnival Association	SI - GT4 - F
15. Rui Santos	Lúmbias Carnival Association	SI - GT4
16. Filipe Silva Cardoso	Fulionas Carnival Association	SI-GT2- F
17. Filipe Miranda	Fulionas Carnival Association	SI-GT2- F
18. Marcelo Sampaio	Fulionas Carnival Association	GT2
19. Rafael Ferreira	Fulionas Carnival Association	SI
20. Fernando Martins	Carnival King	SI - GT4 - F
21. Ricardo José Gomes Rodrigues	Carnival Queen	GT3
22. Acácio Gomes	Masked Group	SI - F
23. Dália Jesus	Masked Group	GT3 - F
24. Ana Cordeiro	Masked Group	GT3
25. Ana Rita	Masked Group	GT3
26. Cristina Ferreira	Masked Group	SI - GT4 - F
27. Ana	Masked Group	GT3 - F
28. Bruno Melo	Artist	GT3 - F
29. Fabion Marques	Ermegeirense Philharmonic Society	GT3 - F
30. Mariana Vieira	Ponterrolense Musical Band	GT3 - F
31. Mariline Silva Costa	OSGA Philharmonic Band	F
32. Tomás Lourenço	OSGA Philharmonic Band	F
33. Tomás S.	OSGA Philharmonic Band	F
34. Laura Dias Martins	OSGA Philharmonic Band	F
35. Ana Isabel Mota Ferreira	A Bolha	SI - GT3
36. Manuel Henrique Tomé Bilro	A Bolha	SI - F
37. Ana Ramos Ladislau	SO	SI - GT3
38. Paula Perdigão	SO	SI - GT3
39. Maria do Rosário Santos	SO	F
40. Rodolfo Jorge Grazina Xavier	Radio Carnaval de Torres Vedras	SI-GT2- F

41. Henrique Sarreira	ACIRO	SI-GT2 - F
42. Carlos Antunes	ACIRO	SI
43. Rui Brás	Centre for Arts and Creativity	SI - GT1- F
44. Ana Almeida	Centre for Arts and Creativity	SI-GT234-F
45. Andreia Domingos	Centre for Arts and Creativity	F
46. Marina Xavier	Centre for Arts and Creativity	SI-GT234-F
47. Laura Rodrigues	Mayor of Torres Vedras	SI-GT1
48. Ana Umbelino	Councillor for Culture, Torres Vedras City Council	SI-GT1-F
49. Dulcinea Ramos	Councillor for Tourism, Torres Vedras City Council	SI-GT1-F
50. Rui Penetra	Promotorres	GT1-F
51. Sandra Pedro	Promotorres	SI-GT1
52. Mário Marias	U. F. de Maxial e Monte Redondo	SI
53. António J. Espírito Santo	U.F. Ramalhal	SI
54. José Sardinha	Researcher	SI
55. Joaquim Severino	Interested in the subject	SI
56. Miguel Brás	Interested in the subject	SI
57. Vasco Forcada	Interested in the subject	SI
58. Fernando Miguel	Badaladas newspaper	SI
59. Joaquim Ribeiro	Badaladas newspaper	F
External organisation - Memória Imaterial CRL/UNESCO Club MEMORIAMEDIA		
José Barbieri	Memória Imaterial CRL (MI)	SI-F
Inês Belchior	MI Assistant	SI
Filomena Sousa	Participatory Methods Facilitator PCI	SI-GT1234-F

*SI - Information Session; WG - Working Group 1, 2, 3, 4; F - Forum